

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 23, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
H-204, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-230, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-220, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McCarthy, Majority Leader McConnell, and Minority Leader Schumer:

As our nation grapples with the spread of the novel coronavirus, community and independent pharmacies will play a critical role in helping patients manage their care, including those with chronic and complex conditions most vulnerable to the disease. At the same time, many pharmacies are finding it increasingly difficult to stay in business due to unpredictable direct and indirect remuneration (DIR) fees imposed by pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs).

PBMs are companies hired by health insurers to manage prescription drug benefits. They sometimes assess fees on pharmacy transactions after the point of sale, which many pharmacies struggle to prepare for financially.

DIR fees grew by 45,000 percent between 2010 and 2017¹, and now, during this financial crisis in which pharmacies are already struggling, DIR fees will likely cause more pharmacies to close their doors. The past two years have seen the closure of approximately 2,000 pharmacies, largely due to DIR fees². As our healthcare system battles a national public health emergency, we should keep pharmacies open, which is what our constituents would expect of us during this crisis.

Ensuring the financial strength of our nation's community and independent pharmacies has never been more important than during the current outbreak. As negotiations on the next aid package move forward, we respectfully request that you consider pausing DIR fees on pharmacies for the remainder of 2020, and ensuring the fees prohibited during this time are not assessed on pharmacies after the coronavirus pandemic has ended.

We appreciate your consideration and look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



John Rose
Member of Congress



Vicente Gonzalez
Member of Congress



Earl L. "Buddy" Carter
Member of Congress

¹ <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2018-11-30/pdf/2018-25945.pdf>

² <http://www.nacds.org/pdfs/government/2020/AdvocateLeaveBehinds.pdf>

Robert B. Aderholt
Member of Congress

Rick W. Allen
Member of Congress

Cindy Axne
Member of Congress

Brian Babin, D.D.S.
Member of Congress

Sanford Bishop
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Lisa Blunt Rochester
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Anthony Brindisi
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Tim Burchett
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Bradley Byrne
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Steve Chabot
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Doug Collins
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Rick Crawford
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Rodney Davis
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Abby Finkenauer
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Brian Fitzpatrick
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Barry Loudermilk
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Roger Marshall, M.D.
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